

Courtney Gooden  
1067 Hartford TPK  
Waterford CT, 06385

July 20, 2007

Governor Jodi Rell  
State of Connecticut  
Executive Chambers  
Hartford, Connecticut

Dear Governor Rell,

It is my sincerest wish that this letter finds you well, and in good spirits. Today I write to you in reference to a matter of grave importance, it's concerning the Department of Correction, and the CT Attorney General Office, both who have intentionally conspired to violating my Civil Rights. In 1999, I was placed on leave without pay when my Initial Certification expired, after this short period of leave, I was terminated.

The reason given for this action by Superintendent of the Unified School District Mr. William Barber was due to an expired certification. I was required to complete three college courses in a specified period of time. The courses needed are standard procedure for Vocational Instructors seeking a teaching certification. Initially three courses are required, two were completed, and the third was nearly complete when this incident occurred.

If it had been standard procedure to terminate a teacher's employment when their certifications expired, especially the first occurrence, I would have no reason to question the voracity of my superior's actions. Yet, at the very facility in which I am employed one of my colleagues experienced a lapse in his certification.

This individual, Anthony O'Brien had not begun taking class, nor even registered to attend classes, but continue working without a break in service. My colleague, Mr. Anthony O' Brien is a White Male. During the same period I was experiencing my certification dilemma, another Vocational Instructor who is now deceased, Mr. Richard Wilcox's certification also lapsed, his employment was not disrupted, and he continued his employment while completing his requirements.

Mr. Wilcox was also a White Male. Before my employment at the Department of Correction Mr. Wayne Durrigan experienced certification problems, his employment was not interrupted. As recently as 2004-2005 Mr. Durrigan had a second lapse in his certification, this time Mr. Barber informed Mr. Durrigan of the lapse by renewing it first, and then informing him of the courses required, Mr. Durrigan is also a White Male.

The Unified School District hired a Graphic Arts Instructor prior to hiring Mr. Anthony O'Brien who's certification lapsed as well, he was afforded a second chance, he failed to address the problem the second time and was terminated, he was also a White Male. I am an African American Male, the only African American Male Vocational Instructor in Unified School District # 1.

There are other cases that prove a disparity in treatment by the current Superintendent Mr. William Barber. The evidence, which proves my point, was initially obtained from the individuals listed above, and confirmed by the Department of Education Bureau of Teachers Certification, in writing. The Superintendent of the Unified School District # 1 repeatedly lied about granting extensions for any employee for the District, whose certification had lapsed. Mr. Barber lied under oath during the CHRO investigation, and his testimony is documented which is proof of perjury.

Mr. Barber lied under oath at the final CHRO fact-finding hearing about providing letters of support to the Department of Education for Certification Extensions. Mr. Barber repeatedly lied under oath at the court order arbitration hearings, even after he was presented with evidence from the Department of Education Bureau of Teacher Certification showing three, White Male Employees who were deficient while he was Superintendent.

When asked if he wrote letters of support for the individuals, Barber said no. Yet documentation from the Department of Education Bureau of Teachers Certification showed teachers who had deficiencies during his tenure as Superintendent, Mr. Barber replied, "I have never written a letter of support for any one as Superintendent of the District." When Mr. Barber was shown the written policy provided by the Department of Education Bureau of Teachers Certification, and asked to read the bulleted line, which stated "as a requirement for receiving a certification extension the Superintendent must provide a letter of support". Prior to reading that item Mr. Barber repeatedly lied about supporting any of my White Colleagues.

In fact he had gone as far as to say that, "the individuals who received extensions negotiated their own extensions without his support". There are two things abundantly lucid about Mr. Barber, one that he is a liar who has shown a blatant disregard for the truth. This was readily apparent when he perjured himself several times under oath. Secondly there is a mountain of evidence that proves that Mr. Barber is a racist.

What's known is, that all the information provided by me in previous testimonies, and by way of discovery, from the Department of Education Bureau of Teachers Certification was known to be true seven years ago, by the Attorney General Office in 2000, when I filed my CHRO Complaint. The AG'S Office knew that Mr. Barber actions were committed based upon his racist ideologies, and that his actions from the very beginning were to willfully and intentionally violated my civil rights.

The AG'S Office was aware that he was guilty before they ever decided to spend the taxpayer money to provide a defense for Mr. Barber. Could the reason the State Continue to Support Mr. Barber, be that the State condones his actions, because all evidences surely support this theory. The most disturbing part about this entire case is, that state and federal laws were broken, and the Attorney Generals Office has been aware of this fact from the very beginning.

This matter could have been resolved more than six years ago. The Attorney Generals Office has taken the position to further victimize the Victim. The AG'S office has gone to great lengths to protect the Unconstitutional Actions of Mr. Barber. In fact the State validated the actions of Mr. Barber, and every opportunity has been availed to ensure that Barber and others like him are protected. No matter what the circumstances, even if he is a known, liar, and a racist.

I was granted the right to file a lawsuit after the CHRO hearing. CHRO admitted the case had merit, but reached no conclusion, even after the case was held in limbo months past the deadline to render a decision had lapsed, this suit was filed in 2001. For more than six years the Attorney Generals Office has manipulated this case.

The attorney I initially hired to file the lawsuit was intimidated by the Attorney General's Office, and began to work essentially for the other side. Two weeks before my case was scheduled for trial last year in 2006, the Judge postponed the trial until July 19, 2007, and ordered that an Arbitrator hears the case before it went to trial.

The Arbitrator was chosen by the court, and I am sure the AG'S office approved his appointment. The Arbitrator concurred that my civil rights had been violated, and that I had been a victim of retaliatory animus. In the Arbitrators decision, his language passively described the true nature of the discriminatory acts, nevertheless discrimination, and retaliation was confirmed.

As a veteran of this country, I took an oath to serve this country and to protect the rights, liberties, and freedoms of its citizens. Yet I find it extremely hypocritical that the Attorney General Office has gone to great lengths to protect, racist criminal, who knowingly and wittingly violates the civil rights of minorities, gays, and women who have been sexually harassed. In stead of doing what is right, such as removing the malevolent agents once they have been identified, and proof has been rendered, the state by way of the Attorney General Office, uses taxpayer's money to protect these predators, and further victimize the victims.

Just recently the Attorney General's Office interfered with the judicial process by covertly convincing the judge hearing this case to strike two of the four claims, citing discriminatory, retaliatory and disparate treatment. This move is not only immoral, unethical, and illegal, it is Un- Constitutional, the mere fact that it circumvents the Constitutions.

I interpret this last action by the Attorney General's Office as re-institutionalize "Jim Crow Laws", more or less to hell with the State and Federal Constitutions, every demoralizing effort conceivable will be employed to ensure that this case is not heard by a jury of my peers.

Once again, one year since the previous postponement, on the eve of the trial, the Attorney General Office has taken the position to protect the guilty by convincing, the judge not to entertain an objection to the motion to strike. The State A G'S Office, and the Judge in question are not allowing my case to be heard by a jury of my peers. So this same Corrupt Judge can rule on the remaining counts.

However, once again my case has been postponed for yet another year, the next tentative trial date is now set for July 12, 2008. What is ridiculously cowardly, and racist is the Attorney General's Counsel's motion to strike two of the four claims, more especially when my claims are not allegations, but proven violations of my civil rights, this position is criminal in and of itself. One would think that the Attorney Generals Office would be trying correcting the infestation of bigots, sexist, racist, and homophobics that are in positions of authority once they have been identified.

The citizens and the employees of this state should not be subjected to an environment that thrives on disenfranchising people based on the ideologies of unjustly persons. My case is a mere one of many, there have been class-action lawsuits filed, by women in this department, class-action lawsuit filed by blacks under the "Brass Keys", as well as other minorities over the years, and in every case the state has taken the side of the perpetrator and not the victim.

Commissioner Lantz requires the Affirmative Action Officer to provide her office with an annual report called disparity in discipline report that blatantly shows very disturbing levels of unfair treatment of minorities in this department.

The department has documentation that shows unfair hiring, disciplining, and promotional practices. The Commissioner herself publicly acknowledges that sexual misconduct, as well as discrimination is a problem in the Department of Correction. This was a quote from Commissioner Lantz in a recent newspaper article written about the new Warden at York.

The newspaper article written about former Correctional Officer Vaden, quoted the Arbitrator's comments concerning a "Culture of Racism that exist at J. B. Gates." The Court appointed Arbitrator in my case cited retaliatory animus, and unfair treatment, which is a polite way of saying discrimination and racism. What is abundantly clear is that these mindsets exist in the institutions, embraced by the department, empowered by the Attorney Generals Office, and executed through the Judicial System!

How does one find justice in an unjust system, why should a person, a citizen, an employee of the State of Connecticut have to ask to be treated fairly? Why is the State Attorney General Office fighting so viemently to circumvent the constitution, by suppressing the truth? Why has the Attorney General Office adopted the " Jim Crow Laws," to make a mockery of the Civil Rights Law, and State/ Federal Constitution? I realize some of this information may be disturbing, however it is, as it has been written, and the evidence to support my statements is not buried away in some mysterious location.

I apologize if have made cloudy an otherwise sun-filled day, or caused tension during a rare melancholy moment. However, I felt compelled to exercise my right as a citizen, as a veteran and a Child of God, the sad truth is, a Dog has more rights than Blacks in this country.

Ironically the very system I pledge my life to protect, the rights, liberties, and freedom of, is the very system that has conspired to strip me of my own rights. Once again I find myself writing a long letter, and for that I am truly sorry, for I am somewhat aware of how demanding your job must be. Unfortunately all request for equality, civil rights, and basic employee rights from a social justice perspective have eluded me in the Department of Corrections, as well as in the States Judicial System.

Many people view Connecticut as a State that is on the cutting edge, we have some of the best institutions of higher learning in the country. Many of our state law are enhanced version of federal laws that normally go beyond federal statues, yet regrettably these protections and rights afforded to the citizens of Connecticut apparently only applies to a selected group of individuals.

I was hoping that you might be able to answer the following questions: When do I become an American? When do I become a citizen of this great state? When will I be afforded the rights and freedom as they are written in the federal constitution/ state constitution? When will women, people who have chosen alternative lifestyles, and people of color employed by the state start getting treated fairly without being targets of discrimination?



I realized these questions might be difficult to answer, yet I know that you have the ability to answer them, as well as the authority to change some of the current conditions minorities are faced with in this department. Four hundred years and counting much has not changed, in such areas as equality, and civil rights. All the laws, amendment, and policies in the world are meaningless unless they are enforced.

So far the departments only response to illegal, and Un- Constitutional action committed by "The Good Old Boys" employed by the State has only resulted in the following statement, " The Connecticut Department of Correction is committed to a work-place free of discrimination, harassment, and intimidation."

Yet the patterns and traditions of discrimination, harassment, sexual harassment, retaliation, and intimidation continues daily with no end in sight. My Grand Father, Father, Uncles, and Cousins, have served this country with honor and distinction. Two of my children are currently serving; one of which is now in Iraq, and the other will eventually deploy. My children believe in their mission, a mission to help establish democracy, and protect the rights and liberties of the people in Iraq, and that it will also help keep America safe.

Since there have been wars fought by this country someone in my family has been there, fighting for the American Way. We volunteered to serve, put our lives on the line for America, and all for which it stands, such as democracy, liberty, justice, freedom of speech, freedom to practice religions, as well as all the other rights and freedoms written in our constitution, originally or by way of amendments.

Then reality sets in, and the serendipitous feelings of jubilation subside, as we are ever so blatantly reminded that today in the year 2007, Blacks remains to be treated as second class citizens. We are reminded every time that we read the passage in the Constitution, “ We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men are created equal. That their creator endows them with certain inalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.”

We are reminded that the words in this passage contain phantasmagoric and subjective meanings for people of color. The great work of our Forefathers is being used like a check-valve, justice, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness flow freely for some Americans, while for others, these freedoms are met with an impenetrable blockade of opposition.

In closing, I often see the bumper stickers that reads, “ Freedom isn’t Free,” this statement for me is a very perplexing statement. I can’t help but wonder how much does freedom cost in America, for it appears to have certain terms and conditions associated with obtaining this policy status. Apparently for Blacks employed by the State of Connecticut, the only policy which seems to be available is the “Old Share Cropper’s Policy.”

We work here, and no matter how well we perform our duties, how well the crops yield, how loyal, or faithful we are, parity continues to be a mirage. The closer we get, the further we are away. Today we must come to the realization that like the Share Croppers of the not so distant past, justice continues on a rotating axis, we can see justice approaching however, for people of color employed by this state, when justice should be in perigee, like a slight of hand trick, it’s really at its apogee.

Again I apologize for such a long letter, but there's not much more that I can do. I have no authority to change any of the injustices that befalls many of the victims working for the Department of Corrections, or having cases heard by the States Judicial System. This letter/dissertation is another attempt to reach out to those who have the power to implement changes. Hopefully, this message in a bottle will find it's way to friendly shores, floating beyond the parallel universe within this execrable abyss of inequality.

Albert Einstein left the world with so many great gifts, his legacies continue to inspire other great minds, and many of his words were profoundly harmonious. Einstein once wrote, " Few people are capable of expressing with equanimity opinions, which differ from the prejudices or their social environment. Most people are even incapable of forming such opinions."

Your, Humble Servant,

Courtney Gooden SSVI

Cc: Richard Blumenthal: State A.G.  
Scott X. Esidale N.A.A.C.P  
Waldren Phillips N. L. N.A.A.C. P.  
Julie Wernau N. L. Day

Courtney Gooden  
1067 Hartford TPK  
Waterford CT 06385

June 7, 2007

Governor: M. Jodi Rell  
State of Connecticut  
Executive Chambers  
Hartford, Connecticut

Dear Your Honor;

I am truly grateful that your office found time to respond to my concerns of, retaliatory, and racist issues, which transpired at Gates Correctional Institution.

As you may know shortly after writing your office, Captain Lindsey H. Tremblay conducted an investigation regarding Officer Erickson's comments. However, I have yet to receive any direct response from Commissioner Lantz office, acknowledging my complaint about the retaliatory actions of Warden Tarascio, in relations to my initial report. Unless, the investigation by Captain Tremblay, or the Department's duplicitous Zero Tolerance Policy Statement, was the response. Nevertheless, I concede that I remain in an addlepatated state concerning this entire matter.

For the record, I would like to say that every ceremonial action taken, including the staunch, but highly disregarded Zero Tolerance Policy Statement, as it relates to racial discrimination in this department, has been grossly ineffective. Even though the language in the policy is lucid, and for most part it lends itself to the hope that persons of color will be treated with dignity and respect, also that they could have a work environment free from discrimination, and other biases. Yet, it appears that there are forces at work within this department that supercedes the actual words, or tangible meaning of this policy.

If, I was a gullible man, may be I could be hoodwinked into ignoring the "Pink Elephant" in the room, unfortunately I must agree to disagree, with the notion that all is well. All is not well, there are serious issues concerning racism, parity in treatment among people of color and our white colleagues. Simply put there exist a racist ideology in this department that is so wide spread, once it is revealed it will make "Jim Crow Laws" look like one of the "Ten Commandment." These issues cannot be resolved by simply ignoring them, especially by chasing an elusive "Red Herring." There is culture/group/organization/family, or whatever you may call it of persons in this department who are racist.

It is no secret that this department is comprised of a culture of people in positions of authority who embrace malicious acts committed against persons of color. Historically, in this department when complaints are filed relating to racism or bigotry, the victim becomes the target. Immediately following a complaint the administration began by looking for ways to discredit the person filing the complaint. If an investigation is conducted at all, his or her complaint is regularly disregarded as unsubstantiated. For example when the decision was made to move my classroom to a dilapidated basement in the Trumbulls, and a Major spoke out against it she became an immediate target.

Internal studies performed by the Affirmative Action division concerning disparity in disciplines among employee of color is nothing less than a disgusting embarrassment. The Affirmative Action report is prima facie evidence; it is empirical data that proves minorities are being intentionally victimized. Over the last several years these reports have shown an increase in the disparity of treatment of minorities within the Department of Correction. The department's punishment of the victim mentality, is nothing less than an evil residential manifestation of racism that ascends and descends the body of this department.

I am not saying that the entire administration is racist, however, if we are aware of the existence of evil racist deeds, and we do nothing, we are all culpable, we are all guilty, by doing nothing we condone the actions of racist perpetrators, bigots, bullies, and the suppressors.

Once again thank you for your time and patience's.

"Few people are capable of expressing with equanimity opinions, which differ from the prejudices of their social environment. Most people are even incapable of forming such opinions."  
"Albert Einstein"

Sincerely, Your Humble Servant;

Courtney Gooden SSVI,  
Vice President of NL, NAACP

CC: Commissioner: Theresa Lantz

Attorney: Martyn Philpot

President of CT: NAACP Scott Esidale

Courtney Gooden SSVI  
131 North Bride Brook Rd.  
Niantic CT. 06357

March 28, 2007

Principal Mary Greaney:

Wednesday March 21, 2007, I voiced my concern regarding an occurrence between Commercial Cleaning Students and Correctional Officer Zurek. Officer Zurek meritoriously denied requests from several students, seeking permission to perform cleaning task in their dorms. However, this denial was accompanied with a statement to the effect that " he" meaning Officer Zurek does not support the Commercial Cleaning Program.

March 27, 2007, during second shift, Inmates residing in G Dorm attempted to gain permission to conduct the triple phase cleaning process in G Dorm Inmate Restrooms. The Inmates request to cleaning was interrupted by quibble from Lt. Griswold. Lt. Griswold made the statement to his subordinate, New Recruit Officer Piascik, " we do not support Mr. Gooden's Commercial Cleaning Program here."

For general information, the triple phase process is a multi-phase process designed to sanitize, disinfect, and deodorize. This system is accomplished through three individual cleaning steps. This process was designed as an attempt to control the harmful spread contaminants, such as pseudomonicidal, staphylocidal, salmonellacidal, bactericidal, fungicidal, mildewstatic, and virucidal agents, which tend to flourish in institutions with large heterogeneous populations.

My decision to enlighten you regarding this matter goes beyond said individual culpability in creating a hostile retaliatory environment. Nevertheless such actions interferes with the educative process, it punishes the students as well as defeats the Commissioner's educational objectives. Since I filed the confidential report concerning a certain Officers racist remarks toward an Inmate, a " Blue Flu" campaign of retaliation has gathered the momentum of a brake-less train traveling down a mountainside toward destruction.

I have had several Officers, tell me to, " watch my back", "be careful" and something to the affect that several officers don't want to be in the same room with me. This information was told to me in confidence by my fellow employees, two of them were Black and the other's were White. For the record, I felt you should know what's taking place here, so that you may have a better understanding of how things work at this facility.

I found the above mentioned comments to be repulsive and undermining. The unprofessional attitudes of certain individuals at this facility do not appear to be reflective of the high standards or ethical behavior the Commissioner expects from a D. O. C. professional. I do not believe that this type of malevolent behavior is consistent with the Department's intended objective, to provide an atmosphere absent of discrimination, harassment and racism.

On the contrary behaviors exhibited by some staff at this facility, qualify as nothing less than disharmonious. I am not one to speculate what facilitates such a fallacious taught process, but what is clear is that things have gotten worse for my students since the Warden informed the Union Stewards of the incident report I wrote.

I hope that you can appreciate my plight here at this Institution, and why I could not follow the chain of command, by reporting this information to them directly. I ask for your forgiveness if I have inconvenienced you with this matter, I also ask for your forgiveness if it places you in an awkward position, but what else could I do?

I am fully aware of the consequences, if I followed protocol at this institution. For it has been made clear, that I should seek no justice here, and never has it been more evident that recent events.

In closing, the undercurrent theme associated with the motives of certain individuals will not affect my resolve to provide my students with training and information necessary to help them transition back into society as productive members. This is a trade, which is necessary and accepted as an intricate part of maintaining domestic and commercial domiciles in all cultures of societies.

CC. Commissioner: Theresa C. Lantz

Attorney General: Richard Blumenthal

Attorney: M. Philpot

State President NAACP: Scott X. Esidale

New London President NAACP: Waldren Phillips

Respectfully,

Courtney Gooden



Courtney Gooden  
Vocational Instructor D.O. C.  
131 North Bride Brook Road  
Niantic CT. 06357

The Honorable Governor Jodi Rell

March 21, 2007

I sincerely hope that this letter finds you well and in good spirits. Please allow me the opportunity to introduce myself. My name is Courtney Gooden I am a Correctional Vocational Instructor assigned to Gates C. I. One week ago today there were allegations from several inmates regarding the use of racial slurs by a Correctional Officer toward a student assigned to my class.

The incident was brought to my attention by the entire class of sixteen students. As a result, I followed protocol and wrote an incident report. Today I was informed that Warden Tarascio called a special meeting this morning at 10:45. The meeting pertained to issues surrounding the Islamic Chaplain Ansari, and the incident report I wrote, concerning Correctional Officer Erickson using racial slurs.

I realize that Mr. Tarascio is the Warden of this facility, and he has the authority to address any matter, which he feels is appropriate. However, I must question his motives behind the recent decision to openly discuss the incident concerning the habitual licentious behaviors of Correctional Officer Erickson. I feel his decision to discuss the report among the peers of Correctional Officer Erickson, as well as other selected staff members was inappropriate, unprofessional, unethical, and immoral.

I have no other choice but to question his motives, because Officer Nesbit filed a report about the same incident on the day it occurred, yet his name was never mentioned. Officer Nesbit is a White Male, he wrote his report days before I wrote my report, yet the Warden felt compelled to mention my name and not Nesbit's. Something just doesn't seem right with that action, later the motive will surface.

Ironically on the front page of the New London Day dated Wednesday March 21, 2007 the headlines addresses claims of discrimination of racial and religious nature. Near the end of the article Brian Garnett, spokesman for the Department of Correction made the following statement, "*The Department of Correction does not target individuals for investigations, nor does it retaliate against those who bring complaints.*"

The actions of the Warden can not be construed as anything less than a blatant set up for retaliation. Just because someone says we do not have problems with racism in the department does not make it true. Nor does the problem become invisible just because some people choose to close their eyes, or cover their ears. When appropriate measures aren't taken to correct discriminatory practices within an organization such as ours, tension builds. As these tensions manifest they spread like a terminal cancer.

I feel the system has failed me, as well as certain individuals in my direct chain of command. This feeling of abandonment was solidified this morning, March 22, 2007, after role call when the Warden had a private side bar with Officer Erickson. However, I am absolutely certain that the Warden's actions have made me a target of the worst kind.

Warden Transco's repeated measures to covenant certain actions of questionable morality only perpetuates the cycles of racial tension, and hostility which currently plague this institution. I find no solace in any of his spoken words, because his actions in relation to race based issues are not in concert with fairness or equality.

I feel that it is pertinent that this letter is written because what usually follows is the planting of illegal contraband, or giving an Inmate contraband, and claiming it came from me, just to name a few. As a Military Veteran, I am aware of the groupthink mindset associated with the Warden's disclosure of this information, after it is disseminated among the population. The results always turn out badly for the victims that are targeted.

I apologize for bringing this matter to your stoop; however, I feel by using any other approach would lead me down a road to perdition. I would like to thank you in advance for taking the time to read this letter as I am quite sure you of all people will have the wisdom to solve this dilemma.

Once again thank you for your time and patience.

CC: Commissioner: Theresa Lantz

State President NAACP: Scott X. Eisdale

Attorney: Martyn Philpot

Respectfully,

COURTNEY GOODEN

To: Principal, Mary Greaney  
From: SSVI, Courtney Gooden  
RE: March 14, 2007 Incident

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March 16, 2007

On March 15, 2007 at 8:45 am, I was informed by ten to twelve of the Commercial Cleaning Student about an incident which transpired in my absences on March 14, 2007. Apparently this incident took place between 8:45 am, and 9:00 am on the morning of March 14, 2007. The details of this incident involved Correctional Officer Erickson a White Male and Inmate Theodore Hawley a Black Commercial Cleaning Student. It has been reported to me that C. O. Erickson called Inmate Hawley a Nigger. Two of the students that were standing outside F. & G control stated that C. O. Erickson exact words were " Fuck that Nigger".

I was made aware that this confrontation transpired in the presence's of C.O. Cardin, C. O. Taylor as well as an Officer in his working test period. More than twelve students echoed the same theme surrounding the incident that Correctional Officer Erickson summoned Inmate T. Hawley over to F & G Control Center twice. The first time Erickson questioned Hawley about his ability to attend the Commercial Cleaning Class, at which time it was alleged that Hawley implied his ticket had cleared. The ticket in which Hawley referred to cleared Monday March 12, 2007, however I am aware that C. O. Erickson had written a second ticket against Inmate Hawley the week of March 5<sup>th</sup>.

I heard yelling from F & G control by Correctional Officer Erickson directed toward Inmate T. Hawley during the week of March 5<sup>th</sup>. On that morning C. O.'s Erickson yelling penetrated the walls of my classroom # 547, although the door to my room was closed. This yelling continued for several minutes, I opened the door to my classroom to see what the fuss was about. Yelling, and screaming at Inmates is not uncommon for C. O. Erickson, on March 8<sup>th</sup> at approximately 8:45 am C. O. Erickson began yelling twice that morning, in one particular incident he was yelling at a newly enrolled student assigned to the Commercial Cleaning Class.

On March 8<sup>th</sup>, the Inmate told me that C.O. Erickson would not let him come into the classroom. I asked the student to return to his dorm as C. O. Erickson had directed. I also informed the student that the temperature of the F & G Classroom was well below 60 degrees and it was not conducive to learning that morning anyway.

I spoke with Principal Mary Greaney concerning the incident on March 15, 2007; she assured me that an investigation involving this matter was in motion. As a Correctional Vocational Instructor, it is my understanding according to the Unit Directives, because I am made aware of issues surrounding a violation of Departmental Policies and incident report should be submitted.

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I am aware that an investigation is currently underway, nevertheless this matter was brought to my attention by several Inmates. This information was also collaborated by various Staff Members. I realize that Staff Members here at Gates receives Mandatory IST Training, in Cultural Sensitivity, Sexual Harassment and Gender Equality, with that being said one would think that we as Correctional Professionals would have a greater degree of sensitivity involving cultural stereotyping.

I respectfully submit this report as instructed according to IST Training, the Unit Directives, and as outline under the Departments Zero Tolerance Policies.

CC; Teresa Lantz, Commissioner of Corrections

Robert Jackson, Director of Affirmative Action

Warden Tarascio, J. B. Gates C.I.

Major Coggeshall, Director of Programs

Respectfully,

Courtney Gooden SSVI

July 14, 2003

From: Courtney Gooden

To: Ms. Greaney, School Principal

Re: C/O Whipple

Dear Ms. Greaney:

It is with much reservation that I have decided write this letter concerning a statement made by C/O Whipple on Sunday July 13, 2003. The following Monday morning staff and inmates that was present when the statement was made by C/O Whipple brought it to my attention. C/O Whipple was quoted saying “ the reason that the administration won’t let Mr. Gooden do anymore cleaning projects is because they don’t trust him”. It is just too strange to be a mere coincidence, and I feel that it was very unprofessional for a C/O to make that statement in the presence of inmates. In the past, I have ignored many derogatory statements made by staff members, many of which were made to me directly. However, the statement made by C/O Whipple, given his previous position as an investigator for this facility has left a scar of emotional degradation. Statements like the one made by C/O Whipple echo’s haunting feelings of unfounded disparities.

Mr. Whipple had taken the liberty of entering my classroom to turn off a fan. I had left the fan running because the carpet was damp from cleaning and a dripping ventilation duct. Actions and comments in the past have reduced me to becoming somewhat of a recluse here at J.B. Gates. My only time out of the classroom is usually limited to lunch in the staff lounge from 11:15 am - 11:45 am.

Staff members have made comments in the past but , after this incident; lunch in my classroom has just become more attractive. I am well aware that I cannot control the traffic in my areas while I am away, but I can keep a constant watch during working hours. Since my employment with the State of Connecticut, I have always gone to great lengths to be the best at what I do, and I will continue to strive for perfection. For the record I am well aware that perfection is never realistically obtainable, nonetheless I shall always endeavor to maintain my goals based on the pursuit of excellence. This letter is not intended to judge as I have been judged, it is not intended as a prelude to an incident report, it is an expression of my thoughts about past and recent events. Placing myself under self-imposed exile seems to be the only way find solace, and provide a safe and secure work environment while protecting my career with the State of Connecticut. I have always taken great pride in being a team player, in the past, as I shall continue to endeavor to do so in the future by making any concession necessary for the good of the Team. In conclusion I felt that it was appropriate to make you aware of this situation and the impact this statement had on me.

Respectfully Submitted ,

Courtney Gooden

CC: Warden Gillis